



**MAIN LIBRARY  
CATAWBA COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM  
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Newton, NC 28658**

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## Maiden librarian a life-long learner

MAIDEN—Most will do anything to get out of class.

Not Betty Jean Stinson. As Maiden's branch library manager, she already holds three college degrees, and who knows? She might go for a fourth.

"I love school and I love learning. If a patron asks a question and I look up the answer, I love passing that knowledge on to the patron. Every day you're learning something," she said of her job at the Maiden Branch.

Stinson joined the library staff in 1983 to serve the Newton circulation desk. She went on to work in Youth Services and was promoted to branch manager of Maiden in 1999. It's a perfect fit. She knows the community well, having lived there since her teen-age years, and loves the challenge of serving patrons and keeping up with the world of libraries.

Self-improvement is her watchword. Growing up in Lincoln County, she rued the days she had to miss school because her family needed her in the field.

Stinson sees reading as a God-given gift.

"When I was 4, I picked up a book and read it, just like that," she said. "We didn't have a lot of books, but somehow reading came naturally for me."



By the time she started first grade, she was already at the third-grade level. Though she was a model student, she soon found herself married with children and working at a local hosiery mill.

“I wanted something more,” she recalled. For her, “more” was managing work and family responsibilities while taking accounting courses at Catawba Valley Technical College. Years later, she challenged herself to earn a B.S. degree in business from Gardner-Webb University and in 2006 she completed her MLS degree from Appalachian State University.

Along the way, she received a call to minister with her husband, the Rev. Vernon Stinson. Ordained 21 years ago, Stinson co-pastors Hopewell A.M.E. Zion Church with her husband. In fact, the couple has presided together at weddings, offering an unusual twist to the ceremony.

Church work gels well with a library career, she says. “Ministry and library services are people businesses. You have to project a positive attitude.”

In her off hours, Stinson enjoys reading nonfiction and inspirational books, particularly those by Max Lucado.

She and her husband have five grown children and 11 grandchildren.



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